

Message Text

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INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

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UNCLAS SINGAPORE 3384

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: OEXC, SCUL

SUBJ: THE CHARLIE BYRD TRIO

1. THE CHARLIE BYRD TRIO A RESOUNDING SUCCESS IN SINGAPORE. THE TWO SCHEDULED PUBLIC PERFORMANCES AT THE 1,000 SEAT SINGAPORE CONFERENCE HALL SOLD OUT AS DISAPPOINTED FANS WERE TURNED AWAY AT THE DOOR, AN UNUSUAL OCCURRENCE IN SINGAPORE. "UNUSUAL" ALSO CHARACTERIZES THE AUDIENCES, WHICH WERE ABOUT THE MOST RESPONSIVE ANY SERIOUS ENTERTAINER HAS ENJOYED IN SINGAPORE. ACCORDING TO JULY 31 STRAITS TIMES: "WHAT WE HEARD THE PAST TWO NIGHTS HAD AS MUCH MUSICAL WORTH AS ANYTHING ELSE IN OUR CONCERT SCHEDULES BUT FEW, IF ANY, OF THE OTHER CONCERTS CAN CLAIM SUCH EXCELLENT AUDIENCE SUPPORT".

2. TRIO IMPRESSED THOSE OF US WHO ARRANGED PROGRAM AS MUCH AS THEY GENERATED AUDIENCE ENTHUSIASM. THEY ARE OBVIOUSLY EXPERIENCED TROUPERS WHO TOOK THEIR ROLE OF CULTURAL EMISSARIES SERIOUSLY. IN ADDITION TO THE PUBLIC PERFORMANCES, BYRD PARTICIPATED IN A WORKSHOP FOR 150 MEMBERS OF THE SINGAPORE GUITAR SOCIETY AND JOINED IN AS GUEST OF HONOR IN A ROLLICKING JAM SESSION AT HOME OF PAO. IN BOTH THESE SESSIONS BYRD DEMONSTRATED HIS TALENT FOR PLAYING WITH STRANGERS AND MAKING THE COMBINED EFFORT SOUND GOOD. BYRD ALSO FOUND TIME, ON HIS OWN, TO MEET

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WITH SOME OF SINGAPORE'S TOP GUITARISTS, TO LISTEN TO THEIR

MUSIC, MEET THEIR STUDENTS AND EXCHANGE IDEAS. SAME IS TRUE OF SIDEMEN JOE BYRD AND JOHN RAE. THE GREGARIOUS RAE WAS OFF TO MEET WITH MEMBERS OF THE SINGAPORE MUSICIANS ASSOCIATION WITHIN HOURS AFTER CHECKING INTO HOTEL. DURING ENTIRE VISIT, TRIO AND ROAD MANAGER MARGUERITE SMITH VERY COOPERATIVE AND GRATEFUL FOR ALL DONE ON THEIR BEHALF.

3. IN MANY WAYS THIS IS IDEAL CULTURAL PRESENTATION FOR SINGAPORE. GUITAR HAS BECOME VERY POPULAR IN SINGAPORE AND OUTSTANDING AMERICAN GUITARIST SUCH AS BYRD WILL BE WELL RECEIVED HERE. IN THE MUSIC THEY PLAY THERE IS SOMETHING FOR EVERYBODY. AUDIENCE WAS GOOD CROSS-SECTION OF SINGAPORE, IN AGE, ETHNIC BACKGROUND, AND SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS. AND FINALLY, VISIT OF FOUR SUCH WILLING AND COOPERATIVE PEOPLE MUCH EASIER TO HANDLE THAN SOME LARGE SCALE PRESENTATIONS OF THE PAST. WHILE THIS MAY NOT RPT NOT BE TRUE ELSEWHERE, THE IMPACT IN SINGAPORE OF THE CHARLIE BYRD TRIO EQUIVALENT TO, IF NOT GREATER THAN, THAT OF THE MAJOR ORCHESTRAS AND DANCE TROUPES WE HAVE PROGRAMMED. HOLDRIDGE

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